

HANDBOOK OF BIOLOGICAL DATA
AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES
THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

EDITOR
ERRETT C. ALBRITTON

2101 CONSTITUTION AVENUE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
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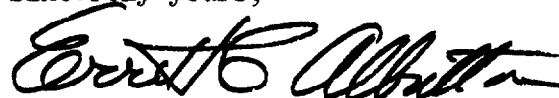
Dear Doctor Lederberg:

On the strength of several recommendations, I am writing to ask you to prepare certain tabular data needed for the Handbook of Biological Data.

The Committee feels that the general subject, BIOCHEMICAL MUTANTS VS. RADIATION AND DOSE, should be represented by one or more tables in the Handbook. The extent and precise nature of the coverage are left entirely to the discretion of the contributor. If you feel that the subject is rather broad and justifies more than one table, please break it up as you see fit, and prepare any significant portion of the tabular material.

I hope that you will be able to inform the Committee, on the enclosed memo card, of your willingness to assume responsibility for this contribution to the Handbook.

Sincerely yours,



ERRETT C. ALBRITTON*
Editor of the Handbook
and Executive Secretary
of the Committee

ECA:clf
Enclosures

(*Fry Professor of Physiology, George Washington University)

TO THE CONTRIBUTOR

You probably have questions about the nature of the contribution we have requested. The following information represents an attempt to reply in advance to some of the queries the Handbook Committee most frequently receives. You will note that our general policy is to depend on the expert judgment of the contributor, who acts as an advisor to the Committee.

Q. What kind of tables does the Committee prefer?

A. In decreasing order of preference: numerical tables; descriptive tables; graphs; charts or diagrams.

Q. How much textual material should I include?

A. No text matter is desired other than an orienting headnote to the table for the benefit of the uninitiated, and such footnotes as you feel to be necessary.

Q. Should my contribution cover the entire field?

A. Definitely not. You are asked to prepare one table within the subject area, the one table you consider to be the most important. If there are other important tables that you feel should be included, we are, of course, anxious to know what they are, and whom you would recommend as competent to prepare them.

Q. Specifically, what data do you want?

A. You, as the expert, are asked to advise the Committee on this matter. We suggest that the table be the one that you would not fail to present to a group of graduate students if you were limited to just one lecture. It should contain basic established fact, stripped of what is borderline or questionable; should approach the ideal of expressing "universal truth," rather than give material good for only a certain time or place, or for unusual conditions of measurement. If a numerical table, we hope it will give the range of variation (lower and upper limits of ordinary range) after each mean value. (The number of measurements ("n") on which the mean is based is also desirable but will not be published.)

Q. How shall I present the data?

A. Design your table for quick comprehension by the uninitiated and for consultation mainly by biologists outside your field. As a first step toward a meeting of minds on how the data should be presented, will you give the Committee your advice by jotting down a tentative format (we look upon this request as most important) including column headings and a sample line or two of data, and mail it to us promptly?

Q. If my contribution involves a comparison of species, what species shall I select?

A. The species covered should be selected to include only those that you feel are typical or representative or of scientific or economic importance. Space does not permit exhaustive coverage.

Q. How extensive should my contribution be?

A. We prefer that contributions be as brief as is consistent with a representative treatment of the subject matter. One to three pages is an average table, but there is no fixed or arbitrary limit on length.